

★★★★★ landmark recording ★★★★★ excellent
 ★★★ good ★★ average ★ disappointing

rather lacking in focus as an album.

Brian Priestley

Jimmy Deuchar

The Complete Tempo Recordings 1955-58

Acrobat Music ADDCD3105 |

★★★★★

Jimmy Deuchar (t) with various ensembles including Ken Wray (tb), Derek Humble (as, bs), Tubby Hayes (ts), Victor Feldman, Harry South, Stan Tracey (p), Kenny Napper (b) and Phil Seaman (d). Rec. 1955-1958



This exemplary two CD set detailing an unsung hero of British jazz's work for the Tempo

label between 1955-58 is another important release from the Acrobat label, whose high standards in reissuing long-unavailable British jazz, both in their attention to the best sound sources and in detailed, informative liner notes, is gradually building a picture of the world class jazz scene that existed in London during the 1950s and 1960s. It should be a revelation to fans, teachers and students alike. How many jazz degree courses in the UK include a study of our own jazz scene in a way that it is *de rigueur* for other Continental and Scandinavian countries to study their own? Whereas in the past a response might have been (and has been given to me), 'Yes, there was some great jazz back then, but it's all out of print, only available at incredible prices in the collectors' market,' now there is no excuse. Acrobat's attractively packaged and priced re-releases are now sufficient in number to construct a course on the history of UK jazz from 1945-1970. Students should really be aware of the great jazz heritage this country has, its history and 'local' heroes like Deuchar, described by *The New Musical Express* in the 1950s as "The best trumpet player in Europe." However, Deuchar was sadly more appreciated in Germany where he was principal soloist for Kurt Edelhagen, the leader of the big band at radio SWF (Südwestfunk) in Baden-Baden, a lynchpin and founding member of the Kenny Clarke-Francy Boland Big Band, Europe's top big band, and a regular guest with the NDR (Norddeutscher Rundfunk) big band. However, his heart lay with smaller ensembles, where he could realise his under-appreciated but considerable talent for composing and arranging. About 40 per cent of these tracks reveal this aspect of Deuchar's musical personality, and alongside his frequent collaborator

Tubby Hayes (Deuchar was, of course, a key member of Hayes' quintet), plus gifted British jazzmen such as Derek Humble, Phil Seaman, Stan Tracey *et al*, we now have a valuable window through which to view the remarkable creativity of a still unsung British jazz musician. **Stuart Nicholson**

Don Ellis

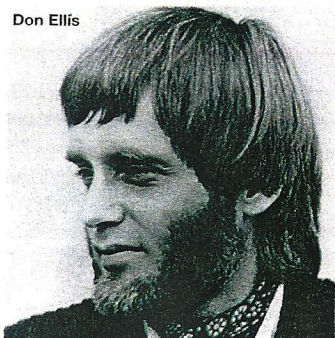
The New Ellis Band Goes Underground/Don Ellis At Fillmore

BGO BGOCD1143 | ★★★★★

Don Ellis (t, elec t, ring modulator, flhn, d), Glenn Stuart, Stuart Blumberg, John Rosenberg, Jack Coan (t, flhn), Jock Ellis, Glenn Ferris, Dana Hughes, Don Switzer, Ernie Carlson (tb), Doug Bixby (tba), Fred Seldon (as, ss, f, cl), Lonnie Shetter (as, ss, fl, clt, ob), Sam Falzone (ts, clt, fl), Hadley Caliman (ts, fl), Mike Altschul (bs, clt, b clt, fl), John Klemmer (as), Pete Robinson (p, ring modulator, clavinet, hpd), Tom Garvin (p), Jay Graydon (el g), Joe Julian (b), Carol Kaye (b), Dennis F. Parker (b), Ralph Humphrey (d, vib, perc), Rick Quintinal (d, vib, perc), Lee Pastora (perc), Ron Dunn (d), Patti Allen (v), The Blossoms (v) and others. Rec. 1969 and June 1970

Don Ellis knew he was fronting a big band in a brave, post-Kentonesque new era. He had done time with the post-Glenn Miller Glenn Miller Orchestra and had studied his As, Bs and Cs and 1s, 2s and 19s. What he brought to the party was a pail of sonority and rhythmicity wings that hadn't been part of the US jazz diet hitherto. To declare an interest it is the era that produced *Don Ellis Orchestra Live at Monterey!* and *Electric Bath* (both 1967) that do it best for me. Ellis' fluency with time-signature compositions created some of the period's most inspirational and most overlooked jazz. True, much was unabashedly, unapologetically intellectual but it swings in ways that others only touched on in dilettante fashion. Of the two releases here *Goes Underground* (1969) touches me less. It was a more commercially predisposed album than most of his canon. An exception is the foot-knotting horo dance rhythms of 'Bulgarian Bulge'. Ellis had bought into Bulgarian music, though to my knowledge he never credited the highly influential Nonesuch

Don Ellis



Maynard Ferguson

LPs (unlike non-jazzers like David Crosby Graham Nash and Paul Simon). 'Bulgarian Bulge' predates the Bulgarian pianist-composer Milcho Leviev, the musician who turned him on to Bulgarian traditional music, joining the band.

The hurdles facing a band packing this number of players are the inevitable trade-offs in the arrangements between the power and density of the collective sound and space or suffocation and air. Consequently, the less fettered spaciness of *Fillmore* appeal more strongly. The risk-taking 'Hey Jude' is a marvellously scored Beatles deconstruction strewn with dissonance, marching rhythms and humour. A cover version it is not.

A coda thought There is a definite whiff of Columbiana about these recordings. Label mates Laura Nyro's 'Eli's Comin' and Al Kooper's 'House In The Country' are clues. Then there are sonorities. Examples might be cousin sounds to Ellis' fellow-Columbia acts. There is the commercialism of Blood, Sweat & Tears on 'Love For Real' on *Underground* and 'Excursion II' on *Fillmore*, United States of America's trail-igniting use of ring modulator in contemporary music. Two real adventures. **Ken Hunt**

Maynard Ferguson

Primal Scream/New Vintage/Carnival

BGO BGOCD-11420 | ★★★★★

Maynard Ferguson (t), with studio big bands including Joe Farrell and Mark Colby (ts), Steve Gadd (d), Ralph McDonald (perc), and Chick Corea (guest track). Rec. 1975-78

Canada's world high-note trumpet champion seems to be enjoying considerable reissue activity of late, though sadly and typically too late for the deceased artist himself to benefit. Hot on the heels of the *MF Horn* series comes this two-disc set, which covers his pocket-big band, hits of the 1970s, originally issued on three vinyl albums as per titles shown above. Dear old Maynard never turned down a commercial session but is always instantly identifiable and takes solid, no-nonsense solos on 'Invitation' and other jazz numbers with worthwhile changes. Otherwise, where asked simply to scream, he

does so as only he could. The sax players, particularly Farrell, also offer worthwhile moments but too often are blowing through various modal pedals, a 1970s trademark which, like bass-guitar and conga rhythm sections, gradually begins to irritate. Synth and even strings also feature on a selection of movie and operatic themes which include 'Pagliacci', with a flute solo from Bobby Militello of Dave Brubeck quartet fame, 'Star Wars', 'Scheherazade', 'Maria' from *West Side Story* and suchlike. Jazz interest is largely confined to Disc Two, where numbers like 'Birdland', 'Over the Rainbow' and 'Stella by Starlight' pop up between 'Fantasy' and 'Theme from Battlestar Galactica'. All a bit of a mishmash.

Jack Massarik

Frank Foster

The Loud Minority

CDBGPM 276 | ★★★★★ Recommended

Frank Foster (ts, ss), Kenny Rogers (as, bs, b clt), Cecil Bridgewater, Charles McGee, Marvin Peterson (t), Dick Griffin (tb), Earl Dunbar (g), Gene Perla, Stanley Clarke (b), Harold Mabern, Jan Hammer (p, el p), Omar Clay, Richard Pratt, Elvin Jones (d), Airtio Moreira (perc) and Dee Dee Bridgewater (v). Rec. 1972



Although best-known as one of the stars of the Basie band, Foster

was also a fine composer, as 'Shiny Stockings' proved, and this classic work is possibly his crowning glory from many points of view. For a start the all-star line-up he assembled produced one of the premier orchestral recordings of the early 1970s, and the meeting of Coltrane's rhythmic lynchpin Elvin Jones and the bass and percussion tyros - Stanley Clarke and Airtio (who were energising the music of Pharoah Sanders and Miles Davis among others), brought a real cutting edge to the session. For the most part the arrangements build a fantastic bridge between modalism, funk and blues, and the slinky, but gritty grooves are scintillating. Above all, the confrontational political resonance of the title track, in which Dee Dee Bridgewater cries out for change, sounds as relevant today as it did four decades ago.

Kevin Le Gendre